

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Specification

The specification is objected to because of a minor informality kindly noted by the Examiner. The specification has been amended to attend to that any informality. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added.

Claims Status

Claims 10-15 are now pending in the application. Claims 1 and 3-6 have been canceled. Claim 15 has been added to accord Applicants an additional scope of protection commensurate with the disclosure. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added. Claim is the only independent claim pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

It is acknowledged with appreciation that Claim 10 through 14 are allowed.

Art Rejections

Claims 1, 3, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,529,695 (Katayanagi, et al.).

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Katayanagi, et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,175,712 (Masuda, et al.).

The rationale underlying the rejections is succinctly set forth in the Official Action.

Response to Art Rejections

Without conceding the propriety of the rejections and solely to expedite prosecution, Claims 1 and 3-6 have been cancelled herein. Accordingly, the rejections are moot and further comment thereon is not necessary.

Closing Comments

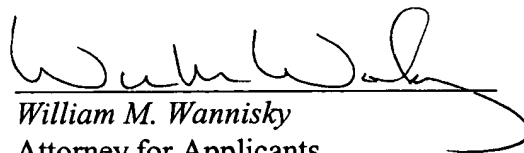
It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

This Amendment could not have been presented earlier in the prosecution, inasmuch as it was earnestly believed that the claims heretofore on file were in condition for allowance. Although a new dependent claim has been presented, it is believed that the Examiner's familiarity with the present application will allow full consideration hereof without the expenditure of undue time and effort.

Favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the application are earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our New York office at the address shown below.

Respectfully submitted,



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